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Mackenzie, G. A.

**SONGS OF
THE INNER LIFE.**



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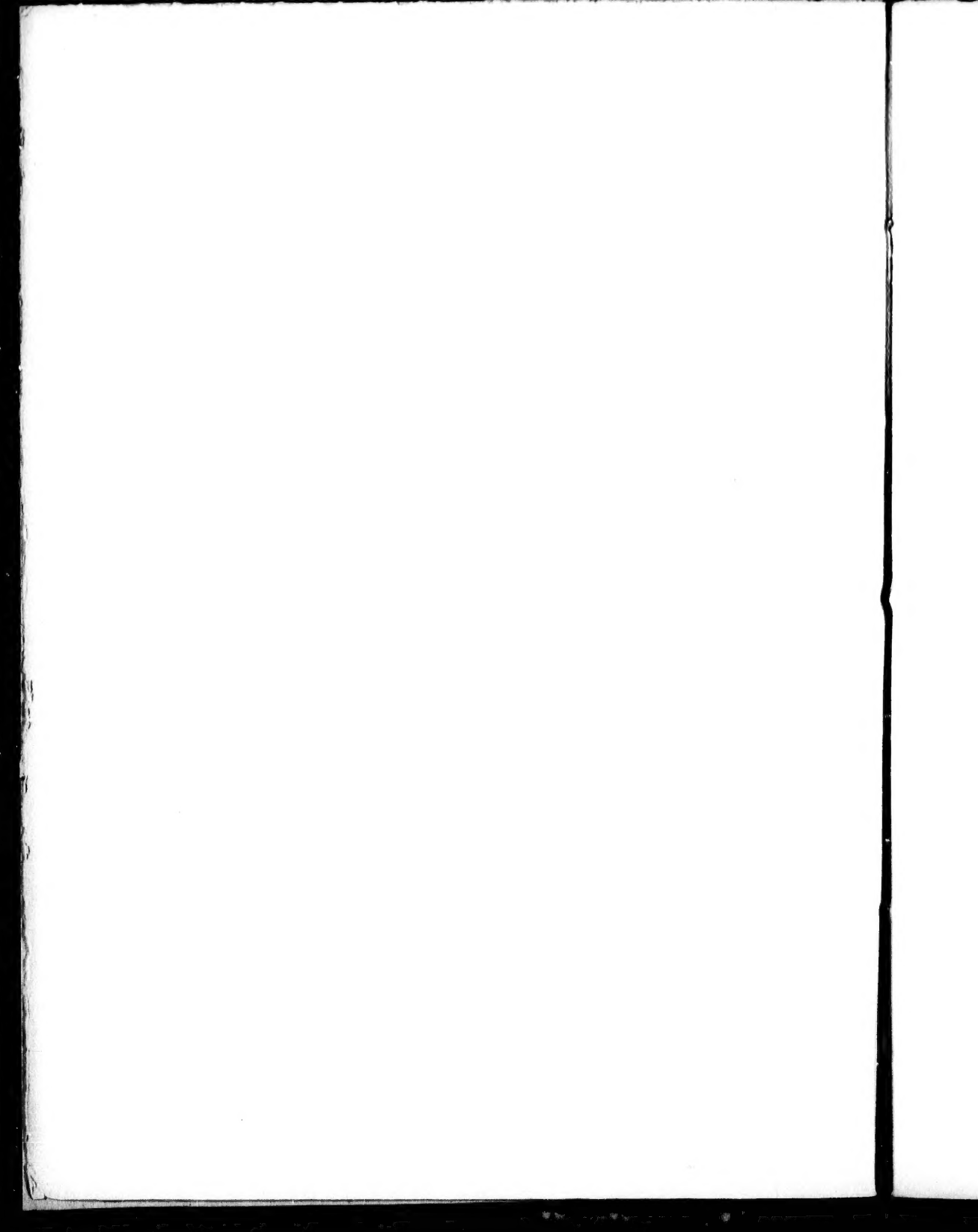
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THESE verses, which are selected from a number of fugitive compositions, do not claim public attention. They are commended to the writer's friends, in the hope that to some of those friends they may perhaps convey a message.

GEO. A. MACKENZIE.

Deer Park,

15th Dec., 1900.



I would not gain the hollow patronage
Of those poor souls whom wealth makes seeming great ;
I would not, in a train of flatterers, wait
The Delphic utterance of some sophist sage,
Cultured and bloodless ; nor would I engage
In bootless traffic with those whose only freight
Is sordid plots and projects ; desolate
Were life, with friends like these, in grief or age.

Not such as these my choice ; but if there be
One whose clear eyes discern the powers divine
About his path ; wise through humility ;
In state most simple, yet too high to lend
His thoughts to aught ignoble—be it mine
To clasp him by the hand and call him friend.

"IN THAT NEW WORLD WHICH WAS THE OLD."

Once, like the Arab with his shifting tent
To some new shade of palms each day address,
My soul, a homeless wanderer, unblest,
Roamed all the realm of change, in purpose bent,
To find a happier world, with banishment
Of that dull pain which drove away its rest.
Through fruitless years my soul pursued its quest,
Until with longing it was well-nigh spent.

Then to my soul a low voice seemed to say,
"Seek in thyself the change," and soon a sweet,
Strange light illumined all the common day,
And there in house, and field, and in the street
From childhood trodden by my heedless feet,
The long-sought world in dewy freshness lay.

HIGH TIDE.

The salt wave, of the quiet valley fain,
Has pushed across the sands. The talking stream
Is silenced by its passing. Will it gain
The untroubled reaches where the lilies dream,
To bask in still content beneath the gleam
Of stormless skies? No; it has climbed in vain;
For even now 'tis falling. I could deem
It breathed a long-drawn utterance of pain.

And thou, my soul, thou dost attain release
From mortal sadness in the fields divine
Where thou art often led; but it is thine
To stay—how short a time! below thy peace
The great world travails, like the moaning sea,
And calls thee back to share its agony.

MAGELLAN.

There is no change upon the deep :
Each day they see the prospect wide
Of yesterday ; the same waves leap :
The same pale clouds the distance hide,
Or shaped to mountain-peaks their hopes of land deride.

On, and still on the soft winds bear
The rocking vessel, and the main
That is so pitiless and so fair,
Seems like a billowy, boundless plain
Where one might sail, and sail, and ever sail in vain.

Famine is there with haggard cheek,
And Fever stares from hollow eyes ;
And sullen murmurs rise, that speak
Curses on him whose mad emprise
Has lured men from their homes to die 'neath alien skies.

MAGELLAN—*Cont'd.*

But he, the captain, he is calm :

His glance compels the mutineer :

In fainting hearts he pours the balm

Of sympathy, and lofty cheer :

"Courage! a few more leagues will prove the earth a sphere.

"The world *is* round : there is an end :

"We do not vainly toil and roam :

"The kiss of wife, the clasp of friend,

"The fountains and the vines of home

"Wait us beyond the cloud, beyond the edge of foam."

"IN THIS WAS MANIFESTED THE LOVE OF GOD."

"Where is Thy love, my Father?" "Look afield:

Mark the soft cloud that dreams on yonder hill—"

"Nay! from the cloud the red death leaps to kill,
And soon the inconstant year robs wold and weald
Of all their gladness." "See, then, love revealed

In thine own being, and the gifts that fill

Thine easy lot!" "Thou sayest, Lord: and still
Death darkens life, joys pass, and quickly yield

To pain." "Nay then, fond soul, if love divine,
Thine own life prove not; if the prospect crowned

With loveliness proclaim not love, the sign
In death and pain shared with thee shall be found:

To Calvary's sacred hill lift up thine eyes,
And read love's perfect proof in sacrifice,"

“IF CHILDREN, THEN HEIRS.”

Lord, Thou didst find me in a low estate,
 And on my brow didst lay thy mystic sign :
 Lo ! then, my churlish nature new-create,
 A princely rank and heritage were mine !
 And now Thy kind and prudent discipline
 Moulds my nonage. In simple tasks I wait
 Until the happy festal morning shine
 When I shall enter on my larger fate.

Sometimes in thought I see the gates unfolding :
 Soft splendours break about me : harmonies
 Not heard of mortal ears, my fancy please :
 Bright forms attend me : and Thou Lord, upholding
 My faint hear: with the mercy of Thy glance,
 Dost bid me to my rich inheritance.

NOT ALWAYS DOES THE STAR OF MORNING.

Not always does the star of morning, bright
 In silver harness, run before the day ;
But often in a flush of angry light
 It breaks on eyes that wish the night away.

Not always does the angel of the spring,
 With zephyrs rock the violet at its birth ;
But often, sweeping on impetuous wing,
 He chills the young, awakening hopes of earth.

Not always does the Love that rules the skies
 Betray the tender urgency of love ;
But often, in some stern and dark disguise,
 It chides the heart it fain would draw above.

MY BABY SLEEPS.

The wind is loud in the west to-night,
But Baby sleeps;

The wild wind blows with all its might,
But Baby sleeps.

My Baby sleeps, and he does not hear
The noise of the storm in the pine trees near.

The snow is drifting high to-night,
But Baby sleeps;

The bitter world is cold and white,
But Baby sleeps;

My Baby sleeps so fast, so fast,
That he does not heed the wintry blast.

The cold snows drift, and the wild winds rave,
But Baby sleeps;

And a white cross stands by his little grave,
While Baby sleeps;

And the storm is loud in the rocking pine,
But its moan is not so deep as mine.

MOURN NOT.

Mourn not as one who would not be consoled,
Nor smite thy breast and passionately cry
That there exists no power in earth or sky
To bless thee; oh, it is not so; behold,
This weight of woe, that like a stone, is rolled
Upon thy spirit, Love did so dispose.

And Love can draw a blessing from thy woes
And peace from tears; then for a little fold
Thy hands in silence; God doth not forget
The patient waiting of the meek; His might
Stands in fair shapes by resignation yet,
As once the angel stood, serene and bright,
Beside thy Master, upon Olivet,
In the sore anguish of that Paschal night.

A REMINISCENCE.

Do you remember, dearest—nay, I know
How well you do remember—that still day
When on the dim lagoon our gondola
Crept towards Torcello? How the sudden glow
Of giant Alpine ridges wreathed in snow,
Like an enchanted city far away,
Pierced the light haze, tower, dome and chatelet,
Ranged in a radiant, unsubstantial show?
In what unearthly beauty they did stand!
What raptures they woke in us, and what sweet
And tender fancies of the perfect land,
Whose shining frontiers might, in such a gleam,
Break on the wayworn pilgrim, when his feet
Falter a moment at the darkling stream!

TRE FONTANA.

Beyond the walls of Rome we did take heed
Of the "Three Fountains," near the "Ostian Way."
You know the pious legend: here, they say,
When Paul's gray head was rolled upon the mead,
Three springs leaped up to bruit the bloody deed,
Which, still up-welling from the sacred clay,
Their three-fold witness render to this day.
Such is the tale: you marvel as you read:
But how or whence it came it is not mine
To say: nor is it mine to set at naught
The simple faith that deems it truth Divine.
In God's school there are many natures taught,
And some are to the seventh heaven caught,
And some are children, asking for a sign.

THE SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION.

There is a spirit abroad who hates the truth,
 And all who walk by faith and not by sight :
 'Twas he who with the hemlock did requite
 The noblest soul who taught the Athenian youth :
 He slew Savonarola without ruth ;
 And in the Oxford meadows made the light
 Which startled England in the sullen night.
 But burn and slaughter as he will, forsooth,
 With bitter pain he sees new witness rise
 For righteousness ; yet still he doth devise
 New plots, and takes new weapons of offence,
 And, often, with the smooth and poison'd dart
 Of calumny, he smites the true of heart.
 May GOD arise, and drive his malice hence !

THE OLIVES AT MENTONE.

Though citron boughs are hung with gold,
The sober olive trees unfold
No gaudy tribute to the day,
But droop like friars, plain and gray,
 Whom thoughts of Heaven hold.

"There are some lives," they seem to say,
"That love to glitter in the day,
"Rejoicing if they catch the eye
"Of any careless passer-by,
 And nourished with display.

"But there are those whose only pride
"Is faithful service, pleased to glide
"Through time in lowly, quiet ways,
"Not greatly stirred though men should praise,
 "Nor grieved should men deride.

THE OLIVES AT MENTONE—*Cont'd.*

"Such souls enjoy a deep repose
"The eager worldling never knows,
"Conscious of calm, eternal Eyes
"That beam upon them from the skies
 " And boundless Love disclose.

"Pilgrim, who dost thy gaze command
"Towards us, the trees of Holy Land,
"If thou know not the blest control
"Of Faith within the chastened soul,
 "Nor yet can understand.

"The Voice that rang through Palestine
"Still calls to thee: 'Dear child of mine,
"Why wilt thou ever restless be?
"Come unto Me, come unto Me,
 " And learn the Life Divine.' "

A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

When wise men of the Orient
Their treasures to Messiah brought,
To Herod's palace-gates they bent
Their footsteps: 'twas a King they sought :
But no celestial glory shone
About the tyrant's guilty throne.

Lo then, through starry tangle bright,
Once more the friendly planet floated !
And soon to their instructed sight,
Its pure and mystic beam denoted
The mean abode which Heavenly Grace
Had chosen for a dwelling-place.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN—*Cont d.*

Was this the place ? Had Heaven declared
 That here their toilsome course was run ?
 Was it for this that they had fared
 Through deserts, in the burning sun ?
 For this had left their stately homes
 By Indus, and the temple domes ?

But still, whatever their surprise,
 Those wise old men were not beguiled :
 They enter, and with gladden'd eyes
 Behold in Him, the Holy Child
 Who sleeps upon the virgin's breast,
^{The} And Hope of every age confest.

Again the star of Christmas-tide
 Is in its season sweetly burning ;
 It calls the people far and wide :
 Towards Bethlehem are many turning,
 And many yearning voices ring,
 "Where is the King ? Where is the King ?"

A CHRISTMAS HYMN—*Cont'd.*

But some by wilful fancy led,
Are wandering far, from door to door :
They will not brook the peasant's shed,
Nor kneel upon a straw-laid floor ;
And so, poor foolish hearts and blind,
Though long they seek, they do not find.

But those who trust a Heavenly Guide
And bend beneath that lowly portal,
From them no earthly veil can hide
The brightness of the Son Immortal.
No more the desolate ways require
Their feet : they have their heart's desire.

PSALM XXIII.

God is my Shepherd: not a care
 Shall fret this tranquil heart of mine;
 By waters still, in pastures fair,
 He leads me with His love divine.

My erring footsteps He doth bring
 Back to the paths of righteousness,
 That I His praise may always sing,
 His wisdom and His love confess.

Thy staff, dear Lord, is in my hand
 And Death's dark vale I'll boldly tread;
 Though famine ravage all the land
 Thy table is before me spread.

What can my heart desire? e'en now
 My cup is full and running o'er;
 Like oil upon a royal brow
 Thy gifts upon Thy servant pour.

Surely Thy tender care has blest
 My footsteps from the earliest day,
 And in Thy house, a willing guest,
 I'll dwell ^{when} ~~till~~ time has passed away.

BENEDICITE.

Oh, all ye works of God, lift up your voice
And bless the Lord! Let the arched empyrean,
With starry splendour pulsing, now rejoice;
Ye winged tempests, chant your sounding pæan:
Answer, ye deeps, and let the land accord
Her tribute—rock, stream, tree, hill, vale, frost, flame,
In grateful concert magnify the Lord:
Bless ye the Lord, and praise His holy name!
And ye, oh sons of men: ye priests who dwell
Within His temple gates: ye lowly souls
Whom God Himself hath taught, His Israel—
Oh swell the ceaseless harmony that rolls
From ordered Nature up to Nature's King:
Bless ye the Lord; His praise forever sing!

